

The Monocacy Aqueduct, Dickerson, Md.
Frederick County, Maryland.

HABS No. Md. 19

HABS
MD.

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Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Maryland

Historic American Buildings Survey
John H. Scarff, District Officer
1012 Keyser Building, Baltimore, Md.

RECEIVED

NOV 19 1934

THE MONOCACY AQUEDUCT

Frederick County
Maryland

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OWNERS

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
Company, 1339 Wisconsin Ave.,
NW., Washington, D. C.

DATE OF ERECTION

1833

CHIEF ENGINEER

Alfred Cruger

CONTRACTORS

M. Byrne, W. Byrne and S. Lot-
hof.

PRESENT CONDITION

Disintegrating

MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION

Stone

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS

Records of The Chesapeake and
Ohio Canal Company.

Rev. Jan. 23, 37 - T.W.

THE MONOCACY AQUEDUCT

Frederick County
Maryland

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HISTORICAL DATA

The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal was constructed to connect the coalfields of Western Maryland with the tide-water of the Potomac at Washington, to provide easy transportation westward for the settlers who were going in great numbers during the first decades of the 19th Century to the open lands beyond the Alleghenies, and provide means of access to markets for the farmers along the route. It was built on the Maryland bank of the Potomac River and taken across the numerous streams coming down ^{from} the Maryland hills in aqueducts.

The aqueduct at the mouth of the Monocacy River in Frederick County is one of the largest and takes the canal across the river on seven stone arches each one having a span of 64 feet. The water of the canal crossed in a stone trough the walls of which are 8' 6" thick on one side and 5' thick on the other. The top of the heavier wall is a continuation of the dirt tow path and the draft animals were protected on the outer side by a sturdy iron rail. The tow rope is protected against rubbing on the stone coping by a wood chafing strip. At the quarter circle abutment at one point on each end the tow rope came tangent to the curve of the iron rail and the constant friction has out grooves in the 1-1/2" vertical members one inch deep.

The main body of the stonework is sandstone from Seneca. The coping stones are of granite from Point of Rocks. They are held together by 13" x 1/2" x 1-1/2" iron clamps. The floor of the canal is of irregular flagging with regular spaced wood sleepers 5" x 5" four feet on centers. At each end of the aqueduct are a pair of slots out in the opposite stone walls of the canal. Into these slots were dropped iron gates to control the water in times of repair to the canal banks.

THE MONOCACY AQUEDUCT

Frederick County
Maryland

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HISTORICAL DATA Cont'd;

A marble stone in the center of the bridge bears this inscription;

MONOCACY AQUEDUCT
Finished 1833

Ches & Ohio Canal Co.

C. F. Mercer Pres't

J. J. Abert
W. Smith
P. Janey
A. Stewart
P. Lenox
W. Price

Directors

Engineers
Alfred Cruger
Principal
C. B. Fish
Assistant

A. B. McFarlan
Inspector of Masonry

Contractors
M. Byrne
W. Byrne
S. Lothrop

J. P. Ingle Clk.

Clement Smith Treasurer Ches & Ohio Canal Co.

^k
Fred Town

In the grave yard of the Roman Catholic Church at Carrollton are buried one hundred Irish work men who died of cholera while working on the canal. It is said the canal company hired slaves from nearby slave owners at eight cents a day.

The canal was in continuous use from 1833 to 1921. After that by order of the Health Department it was filled with water each year till 1936. In the Spring floods of 1936 the water backed up the valley of the Monocacy till it reached the height of 8 feet above the top of the construction. Since the water subsided the canal has been dry and apparently abandoned.

The stones show signs of considerable movement and the stability of the arches is much impaired. At one point the masonry has been reset. It can not be many years before the stones must fall and the aqueduct, with the action of frost and floods, begin rapidly to disappear.

John W. Heath

Addendum to
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, Monocacy Aqueduct
(Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park)
42.2 miles above tidewater (above lock 27)
Dickerson vicinity
Frederick County
Maryland

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240